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ABSTRACT

The concept of performance-based teacher certification asks that criteria for certification (whether knowledge and/or behavior and/or the product of behavior) be made explicit and that students of teaching be held accountable in relation to these criteria. Central to the question of performance-based criteria is the issue of whether performance beyond the knowledge level should be defined in terms of teacher behavior, the product of teacher behavior, or some combination thereof. Arguments for using teacher behaviors as the basis are: 1) It is logical to focus on what a teacher does rather than what he knows, believes, or feels. 2) Teacher behavior is the primary determinant of teacher influence. 3) Research has laid out observable, measurable categories of behavior. 4) Such a focus provides one means of meeting the requirement of accountability. The case for demonstration of ability to bring about specific instructional outcomes as the basis for certification: 1) It represents an absolute criterion of teacher effectiveness. 2) It accommodates individual differences in teacher performance or styles. 3) It requires that effective behaviors and/or instructional programs be developed and utilized. 4) It requires the whole educational system to be clear about goals. 5) It takes much guesswork out of teacher hiring. (Included are lists of issues that need to be resolved if teaching behavior or if the products of teachers' behavior becomes the basis of certification.) (JS)

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THE FOCUS OF PERFORMANCE BASED CERTIFICATION: KNOWLEDGE, TEACHING BEHAVIOR, OR THE PRODUCTS THAT DERIVE FROM A TEACHER'S BEHAVIOR

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An Introduction to the Criterion Issue

For several decades the primary basis for teacher certification has been a given grade point average for a given number of courses in given areas of study, coupled with a recommendation from a recognized teacher education institution that a particular student is "qualified to teach." Operationally such criteria for certification requires that a student demonstrate that he knows enough in various courses that he can pass them with a grade of C or better, that he is able to apply that which he knows at some minimal level as a "student teacher," and that he is physically, mentally, morally, ethically, and attitudinally acceptable as a member of the teaching profession--as judged by representatives from the faculty of the college at which he is matriculating and the supervisor of his student teaching experience.

Generally speaking the basic assumption underlying such an approach to certification is that knowledge of subject matter, teaching methods, childrens' learning, etc.--as measured by course grades--coupled with a brief testing of the ability to apply what is known in a student teaching situation and a subjective judgment as to the acceptability of a particular student to the teaching profession, is an acceptable basis for predicting

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[1]A paper prepared for the "Performance Based Certification" conference, The Florida State Department of Education, Miami Beach, Florida, May 19-22, 1970.

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the success of a prospective teacher. The reverse assumption is also applied: there is no need to systematically gather evidence as to the ability of a prospective teacher to behave in specified ways, or of his ability to carry out the functions for which he will be responsible within a school once he is certified.

The point of view represented by a "performance based" approach to teacher certification[1] denies such an assumption, and holds in its place the following:

1) more systematic specification of that which is to be known, as well as more stringent criteria for knowing, must be introduced within teacher education;

2) knowing, and the ability to apply that which is known, are two different matters, and the certification of teachers should focus as much upon that which a prospective teacher is able to do as it does upon that which he knows;

3) the criteria for assessing that which a prospective teacher can do should be as stringent, as systematically derived, and as explicitly stated as the criteria for assessing that which he knows;

4) the assessment of both that which is known and that which can be done must be carried out and described systematically; and

5) when a prospective teacher has demonstrated that he knows and can do that which is expected of him, and only then, will he be granted certification.

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[1]The meaning of the term "performance based certification" is not at all clear--either in the literature or in the heads of teacher educators. In a strict definitional sense, performance based certification means only that the criteria for certification be made explicit, and that prospective teachers be held accountable for meeting those criteria. Given such a definition present methods of certification are "performance based" in that they make explicit the grade point average, the course of study, etc. that are required for certification, and hold students accountable for reaching them. Rightly or wrongly the term has taken on additional meaning, and now generally refers to or includes a) more stringent criteria for knowing than course grades, b) the performance of specified teaching or teaching related behaviors, and/or c) the demonstrated ability of a prospective teacher to bring about desired instructional outcomes, i.e., desired outcomes in pupils, or desired noninstructional outcomes, e.g., the ability to design and develop a curriculum or the ability to design and carry out a curriculum evaluation study. These three "classes of criteria" for certification can be referred to respectively as knowledge criteria, skill criteria and competence criteria.

Two operational patterns generally attend such a position: a) the release of a teacher education program from a rigid dependency upon time, course units, grades, etc. as a basis for certification; and b) a portfolio describing that which a prospective teacher is able to do and to accomplish as well as that which he knows, would replace the traditional college transcript.

Granting the validity of such an approach to certification a central issue remains: are the requirements beyond knowing to be stated in terms of teacher behaviors, the products of teacher behavior, or some combination thereof.

The purpose of the present paper is to present the case for both teaching behaviors and the products of a teacher's behavior as a basis for certification, and to spell out some of the issues that have to be resolved depending upon the choice made. The hope underlying the paper is that it will provide persons attending the conference with a reasonably clear basis for making such a choice, and a reasonably clear idea of the issues to be resolved depending upon the nature of that choice.

The Case For the Demonstration of Specified Teaching Behaviors as a Basis for Certification

The move to consider the demonstration of specified teaching behaviors as a basis for certification reflects a series of interrelated movements in education: a) the recognized futility of searching for teacher characteristics or educational backgrounds as predictors of teaching success (Biddle and Ellena, 1964); b) the emergence of the study of teaching behavior as a popular subject for research (Simon and Boyer, 1970), and with it the translation of the categories of behavior used in research into training systems to be mastered by preservice or inservice teachers, or to be used

by supervising teachers; c) the rise of the "behavioral objectives" movement; d) the increasing criticism of education generally and teacher education specifically; and e) the increasing concern with accountability in education as a whole. The arguments for adopting teaching behaviors as a basis for certification are roughly as follows:

1) The logic of focusing upon what a teacher does instead of what he knows, believes, or feels, for what he does is a reflection of what he knows or believes or feels;

2) Since it is a teacher's behavior that is the primary determinant of teacher influence, it is important that prospective teachers be able to behave in ways that are desirable;

3) The research that has been done on teacher behavior has laid out categories of behavior that are observable, measurable, and relatively easily mastered; and

4) Because such a focus has a good deal of common sense about it, and because it permits systematic measurement, it provides one means for meeting the requirement of accountability in teacher education.

In addition, if pressed to defend the charge that the products that derive from a teacher's behavior should be viewed as the final criterion of teaching success, rather than classes of teaching behavior, it can be argued that we are not as yet clear about the products that should derive from a teacher's behavior, and that even if we were, such outcomes would vary by differences in settings, they would be difficult to measure, etc. etc. As a consequence, so the argument goes, it is safer and easier to focus upon classes of teaching behavior that are assumed to be related to desired outcomes.

A Case For Demonstrating the Ability to Bring About Specified Instructional Outcomes (Pupil Outcomes) or Noninstructional Outcomes as a Basis for Certification

The major argument in favor of a product orientation to certification, is the one to one relationship it represents between performance prior to

certification and performance subsequent to it. If a teacher is to be accountable for bringing about specified classes of learner outcomes or non-instructional outcomes subsequent to certification, it would seem reasonable to require that prospective teachers demonstrate that they can bring about such outcomes prior to certification. There are a number of advantages to such a position:

1) it represents or provides an absolute criterion of teaching effectiveness, and thereby meets the ultimate test of accountability;

2) it accommodates individual differences in teaching preferences or styles in that it allows for wide variation in the means of teaching a given outcome, i.e., in teaching behaviors, but holds all teachers accountable for being able to bring about given classes of outcomes;

3) it allows for the fact that at this point in time we are not at all clear about the specific teaching behaviors that bring about specified outcomes in pupils, or the specific behaviors that bring about selected noninstructional outcomes, but it does require that effective behaviors and/or instructional programs be developed and utilized;

4) it forces the entire educational system, as well as teacher education, to be clear about the goals or objectives of education, and to become clear about the means for the realization of those objectives; and

5) it takes much of the guesswork out of hiring new teachers, for each teacher would have a dossier which summarizes in detail what they can or cannot do at the time they receive certification.

If pressed to defend the position on the basis of education not being clear about its goals or objectives, or not being clear about the means by which the objectives it is clear about are to be realized, the answer is simply "then that's a task that education must get on with, and a teacher education program so designed will contribute to that task."

Some Issues That Need to be Resolved If Teaching Behavior is to be Used as The Basis For Certification

If one accepts teaching behavior as a primary basis for certification then a number of issues must be resolved before such a certification program

can be implemented.

1) What classes of teaching behavior are prospective teachers to be able to demonstrate? And who is to determine what these classes of behavior are to be? The teacher education community? The State Departments of Education? The professional education associations? The citizens within a community, county or state? What role should the students of teaching have in the identification of such behaviors?

2) What will the "effective performance of specified teaching behaviors" look like? That is, what will the criteria be for the successful performance of a given teaching behavior? Who will determine these criteria? How will a behavior be assessed to determine if it meets these criteria? And who will do the assessing?

3) In what settings will the behavior be demonstrated? In "film simulated" classroom settings? In "micro-teaching" situations where children are brought to an experimental classroom or laboratory? With small groups of children in on-going classroom situations? With entire classrooms of children?

4) In how many settings should a given class of teaching behavior be demonstrated, that is, if a student is preparing to teach at the elementary level should he demonstrate a given teaching behavior at all grade levels? For differing kinds or groupings of students within a sample of grade levels? In some or all of these settings on different occasions?

5) What variation in the performance of a given teaching behavior or in the selection of teaching behaviors to be demonstrated is acceptable across students? Are all students in a given program expected to perform to the same criterion level on the same set of teaching behaviors? If not, who is to determine what variance is acceptable?

6) What is to be the functional relationship between knowledge of subject matter, knowledge of children's learning, etc., and given classes of teaching behavior in relation to the final criteria for certification? Will demonstration of a given level of mastery on all be required? Or will the demonstration of a given teaching behavior supersede or be able to take the place of given classes of knowledge or given sets of attitudes? Will there be any requirement on the part of prospective teachers to demonstrate that they can effect given outcomes with pupils or classes of noninstructional outcomes?

7) How are teacher education programs to be structured and operated if the primary requirement for certification is the demonstration of specified teaching behavior?

While each state, and each teacher education program within each state, must find a satisfactory set of answers to these issues guidance in search for

such answers is provided by most of the models developed in the USOE sponsored Elementary Teacher Education Models Program. With few exceptions the elementary models developed were designed around a commitment to teaching behavior as a primary basis for certification.

Some Issues that Need to be Resolved if The Products of a Teacher's Behavior Are to be Used as The Basis for Certification

If one adopts the position that pupil outcomes or classes of non-instructional outcomes are to be a primary point of reference in teacher certification a host of related issues also arise. By and large these issues parallel the issues that one needs to consider if adopting teaching behavior as the primary focus for certification, but their content or focus varies.

1) What are the pupil outcomes to be realized? What are the non-instructional outcomes to be realized?

2) Who is to determine what these outcomes should be? If the answer is a "coalition of institutions and agencies, with strong community representation" then one must determine specifically who is to be represented in the coalition and how such representation is to be made. Also clarity will have to be given to the exact procedures to be followed in arriving at the specification of the instructional and noninstructional outcomes to be realized.

3) What will the "successful realization of an instructional or noninstructional outcome" look like? Obviously, the demonstration of the ability to bring about given pupil outcomes would mean that success would be measured in terms of pupil behavior, for example, that a pupil or set of pupils can in fact read at a given criterion level or are in fact more considerate of feelings of others. Similarly, the assessment of success in the realization of noninstructional outcomes would require that evidence be obtained, for example, that instructional materials developed are in fact productive of pupil outcomes, or that working with parents has in fact been successful, that is, that parents do in fact understand the school's policy regarding the reporting of pupil performance, or that they are accepting of the initiation of a new school policy. Given such a focus to assessment, the question still remains: what are the measures of success in the realization of such outcomes going to look like? Since children differ, success in getting a child or group of children to read will look different for different children or different groups of children. So too

will success in the development of curriculum materials, or working with parents: success must always be measured against the kinds of materials development being undertaken, the objectives to be realized by those materials, the nature of the parents being worked with, etc. Since success cannot, therefore, be normative or standardized, it means operationally that success must always be situation specific. Given such a point of view what would be meant operationally by certification standards?

4) As in the case of teaching behaviors, how many times and with what kinds of children must prospective teachers demonstrate that they can in fact bring about given classes of outcomes? Must they demonstrate that they can bring about a given outcome for all grade levels within an elementary school if they are planning to become elementary teachers? Must they demonstrate that they can bring about such an outcome for first or third or fifth grade children, but in a variety of school settings? Must they demonstrate that they can bring about a given outcome for differing groups of children, or different individual children within a single classroom setting? And how many outcomes must be demonstrated in order to meet the certification requirements?

5) What variation in outcome demonstration can be permitted across students within a given institution, or across institutions within a given state? Can students vary in number of outcomes demonstrated? Can they vary in the criteria of success to be applied to a given outcome, depending upon the nature of the pupils being taught or the context in which teaching is occurring? To what extent does commitment to elementary or secondary education lead to differences in certification requirements? To what extent does specialization within elementary or secondary, or student preferences within a given specialization at the elementary or secondary level, permit differences in certification standards to arise?

6) What is the functional relationship between knowledge of subject matter, the nature of children's learning, the method of teaching, etc. and the demonstration of the ability to bring about given classes of instructional and noninstructional outcomes in relation to teacher certification? Is there to be any requirement as to the demonstration of specified teaching behaviors?

7) How will teacher education programs be structured and operated if the primary requirement for certification is being able to demonstrate that one can in fact bring about specified classes of instructional or noninstructional outcomes?

While any state, or any institution in any state must find answers to such questions if they are interested in implementing a product based teacher education certification program the ComField model, one of the ten models developed in the OE sponsored Elementary Teacher Education Models Program, will provide guidance in such inquiries.

Concluding Comment

The growing dissatisfaction with present approaches to teacher education, the availability of increasingly analytic tools in teacher education, and the demand for greater accountability in education generally have given rise to the concept of "performance based criteria" for teacher certification. In general terms, performance based certification asks that the criteria for certification, whether those criteria are knowledge and/or behavior and/or the products of behavior be made explicit, and that students of teaching be held accountable in relation to those criteria if they are to become certified.

Central to the question of performance based certification is the issue of whether performance beyond the knowledge level should be defined in terms of teaching behaviors, the products of teaching behavior, or some combination thereof. On philosophic as well as practical grounds the question is real, and in the author's judgment of utmost significance to education and teacher education in the decades to come.

The purpose of the present paper has been to raise some of the questions that surround the issue, build the case for both positions in relation to the issue, and spell out some of the related issues that need to be resolved depending upon the position taken. The bias of the author is toward certification criteria that focus upon the products of a teacher's behavior, rather than a teacher's behavior per se, for the products that derive from teaching are after all that which education is ultimately about. It is also reasonably safe to assume that these are also the criteria by which teachers

and the teaching profession will be held accountable in the future.

Whether the profession is ready to take such a stand is yet to be seen. The fact that the public is ready to take such a stand has already been seen.